National Heritage Team of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Oral History Program
Narrator/USFW Retiree: Virginia "Ginny" Wood and Dr. Robert "Bob" Weeden
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Interviewed by: Roger Kaye and Female

Roger Kaye: *I am Roger Kaye, this is Virginia Wood and Dr. Bob Weeden*

Virginia Wood: Ginny.

Roger Kaye: *We are here on June 9, 2006, and this will primarily be a dialogue between Ginny and Bob primarily about the early years of the conservation movement in Alaska.*

Ginny Wood: Do you want the revised version!

Female: *No, no --- no revisionist history here!*

Roger Kaye: *Well, Ginny, we've interviewed you several times about your background and your role in ACS [Alaska Conservation Society], and so what I'd like to do is ask Bob to talk about his perception of how and why it was formed and his early involvement in it. From there, we'll maybe discuss some of the issues that you two worked on together, right here in this house. Bob.*

Bob Weeden: The Alaska Conservation Society was the first statewide conservation organization in Alaska that could claim to be both statewide and contemporary, modern, in its view of what conservation meant. It was also the first time in my life when I was truly an adult, because I was just out of school, had been in school for 21 out of 26 years, and finally was ready to join real life and somehow also ready to join some kind of activist organization of dealing with nature.

Roger Kaye: *Why, can I ask you why did you... Most professionals aren't worried about activism, they just want the job, but what made you different?*

Bob Weeden: Oh, I don't know, I honestly don't know what makes anybody the way they are. I guess I've always wanted to be involved in community, whether it's big or little community affairs. As a graduate student, you're kind of focused on you own self, it's a very selfish time of life, and you're trying to get the skills to cope. Finally, when I got to be a big boy and Judy married me and we came up north to have a family, it seemed like it was time to act like an adult and part of that is being an active citizen. I mean I guess that just was in me, I don't why. It just was going to be expressed somehow.

But I was going say that ACS started in late 1959 to early 1960, and had a 20 year run. I think, among other things, it proved that for the first time that there was, and is, a constituency to speak out for conservation, for wild things, for nature in Alaska. Sometimes it doesn't seem like it, newspapers don't show it much, but it's there.

Another thing it showed was that a conservation organization, once it gets started, will collect friends really rapidly if it has a good character and a fairly strong character.

The ACS character was really formed by the Fairbanks group, which was the first of 10 or 11 chapters eventually. We were formed by a group of scientists and a group of passionate citizens who understood why the scientists were saying what they were saying. It all became a collective of people where the common denominator was the love of outdoors, however you expressed it, whether you loved skiing or abhorred it or whatever, it didn't matter, it was there in some form.

That, plus a respect for science, or a knowledge of what it could do, set the character of ACS so that we were forever doomed, you might say, to want to get some facts about what was going on. Which isn't always necessary or obviously done in conservation work. Sometimes you just take a line and you pursue it, knowing you are going to compromise in some direction anyway. But you begin by being outrageous, not worrying where the chips fall, and then fall back to something that you've hoped to get all along.

But our style was to kind of build up slowly, be a little bit deliberate, a little bit, "Umm, yeah, well, no," you know, kind of, "Well this is on the one hand, and here's on another hand, and everybody's got at least two hands."

It was slow and cumbersome, and I think we paid for it in someways during the D2 affair, when the power and the actions in Washington, D.C., and we weren't quite taking the line that the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society and the Alaska Coalition were taking. But I think in terms of homegrown organization whose focus was not as the Sierra Club was or Wilderness Society, was not nationwide preservation issues, but living in Alaska with nature. It seems like we really fit the bill.

Well, then life matured around us. Nature is changing all of the time and society is changing and it's hard to keep, but the ACS finally came to the end of its' road as a collective umbrella organization exactly 20 years after it formed. Now many of the chapters that were formed still go on, because we insisted that they be incorporated themselves, have their own officers, raise their own money. Which was a stroke of brilliance, which we didn't know about, but it was, because when the umbrella dissolved, the shaft was still there and people put their own sunshade on it.

We had chapters, gosh Ginny correct me, but Fairbanks and Anchorage, Kenai sold out, now Homer, Kodiak, Haines, Skagway, Juneau, Sitka, Petersburg, and Ketchikan. So, there are at least those 10.

Ginny Wood: Yeah.

Bob Weeden: It was a very widespread organization. And as I say, in many of those places the folks were similar. A little knot of conservationists would collect around one kind of renegade unafraid agency person, whether is was a Will Troyer or a Dave Spencer or whoever it was, wherever it was, somebody was willing to kind of get

involved and people would collect around her or him and away you'd go, Dixie Baade in Ketchikan, obviously.

Anyway, so that's kind of what ACS is run in Alaskan history. We lost out finally, you might say, if it was a competition at all. We lost out because we decided at the very start that there was a joy and a benefit in being a volunteer organization. And except for struggling to pay a half-time executive secretary, Tina Stoneroff and a couple of others, we remained a volunteer organization. And frankly, when we pitted say our public outpourings with those of the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, which we helped to start, and the Alaska Center for the Environment in Anchorage and Southeast Alaska Conservation Council, all of those had core staff, sometimes one person, sometimes one and a half, two people as they were able to build. Eventually, the Alaska Conservation Foundation and the Alaska Environmental Assembly began taking over the coordinative function that ACS and its' yearly meetings had always had. But then there was money available to get conferences together anywhere, usually Anchorage and sometime Juneau. So some of our key functions were taken over by the really hardcore power of staffing. Now, in some ways, the staff always is in danger of taking over from the volunteers. They are the ones that spend all day, every day thinking about something, they are the ones that have the arguments in hand. Pretty soon everybody is tugged along like the cars on a freight train and ex-staff members are the engine. That's like any benevolent dictatorship, that's great when it works. It's not so great if it doesn't work, because then you don't have the backup volunteers. But anyway, ACS took one road and came to the end of that road for various reasons.

Ginny Wood: Well, I think one of the reasons was is that we operated out of livings rooms with a Camp Denali hand-cranked mimeograph machine.

Bob Weeden: Gestetner!

Ginny Wood: Yeah! We didn't even have telephones where we lived, if you lived out of town, which almost everybody did. We would meet at the university once a week and nobody stopped us, now they would, least of all the professors would let us use a classroom. But I think it was we realized that we still had money, more money when we started. What was it, $1.00 a year for dues when we started?

Bob Weeden: Not much.

Ginny Wood: So we had a lot more money then when we started. But we found out that you can't be affective in this day and age, or even 20 years ago, without having something more than a hand-cranked mimeograph machine and telephones and a staff. A telephone that someone could get in touch with the organization. Well we didn't even have telephones at home in those days. So, I think it was that the times changed and we decided we should quit while we were ahead. It wasn't because we weren't effective, it wasn't because we didn't have money in the treasury, it wouldn't be much by nowadays, but it was enough to buy postage and a staff and somebody to answer the phone.

Bob Weeden: And our constitution required that if there was a dissolution, that we would give the money to like-conservation organizations. So that was our last official act just before we closed down, was to distribute our assets; the archives to the university and the dollar assets all of the then existing ACS chapters.

Ginny Wood: And we didn't start out to make chapters, they got in touch with and ask, "How do you become a member?" And we said, "What's your issue? What's your community fussed up about?" Well, you start there. Don't try to go in and start something that they aren't ready for. Some of them have active Sierra clubs and loon society things and lots of our members belonged, but it started as a homegrown thing and on homegrown issues, and we just felt that's how others should start. Imagine if you don't even have a number in a telephone book.

Bob Weeden: Right. You know we even, you remember this, we even helped to start Yukon's first conservation group.

Ginny Wood: Oh, that's right.

Bob Weeden: John Lammers contacted us because he and his wife had homesteaded at Pelly Crossing, north of White Horse, and it was pretty wild at that point. But then one day bulldozers began coming down the riverbank and showing up in his front yard. They had a mineral lease where he was homesteading. And of course the surface rights were one thing and the underground rights were another, and he was just absolutely outraged. So he tried to fight that and then moved to White Horse because he didn't like Pelly Crossing anymore. In White Horse he was trying to figure out how to get something going and learned about the ACS in Fairbanks. I guess it was seven or eight years after we started that the Yukon Conservation Society got going and Don was its' first president.

Ginny Wood: And remember Petersburg?

Bob Weeden: Yes.

Ginny Wood: The guy that became very active, but you couldn't have gone in there and gotten Petersburg, but they fish.

Female: What was the issue in Petersburg?

Ginny Wood: Well, the Petersburg Creek, they were going to log it, and that's their playground. It takes an issue, because we weren't out to proselyte or to get other chapters started, we just were taking care of what was here. But Fairbanks, at that time, was the second largest city. Fairbanks started out to be much bigger than Anchorage, long before Anchorage was even thought of. Anyway, we didn't ever try to start a chapter, they contacted us and we said, "What's your issue? What's the bonfire in your backyard? Well, get together."

Bob Weeden: Down there, again, the people who started it --- one person was actually not living in Petersburg, but that's Skip Wallen, he has a godfather who adopted him and lives in, was it Gochis was his native name, from Petersburg. But Skip was very, very incensed over the Forest Service's proposal to log Petersburg Creek. And then Emily and Harry Merriam both got involved.

Ginny Wood: And Jack.

Bob Weeden: Not Calvin.

Ginny Wood: Calvin, yeah.

Bob Weeden: In Sitka, that was, yeah, he was in Sitka or Petersburg.

You may know, Roger, because you've seen all of these reviews or bulletins of ours, there was a special Petersburg Creek issue with Skip Wallen's beautiful photographs. That really came out also as an album, a photo album that was available commercially for awhile. It was just lovely, I may have a copy myself.

But yeah, that's what got the Petersburg chapter started. But all of the chapters had a similar story.

Ginny Wood: Yeah, it was one...

Bob Weeden: It was logging in Haines for example.

Roger Kaye: Let me ask you, you know I joined both groups, Fairbanks Environmental Center and ACS in 1974, when Ginny and Celia signed me up after orienting me at Camp Denali.

Bob Weeden: Now was Judy Kowalski still there at the Fairbanks Environmental Center?

Roger Kaye: She actually just left I think, of course Max was temporary or acting.

Ginny Wood: Well the hired him and we kind of were tangential supporters of it. In fact, we divided up... We had just gotten... somebody sent us some money, an award for being the best, what was that we got the $2,500.00 for? Award for being the best small environmental organization. We still had money in our treasury, so we just divided it up between the others.

Roger Kaye: Well, you know, it was my impression, being a member of both and being very young, that ACS was very professional, very academic, very cautious in the stands it took. Where the Environmental Center was more appealing to some of us younger folks because it was less patient. Is that your impression?

Bob Weeden: Oh, I think that was true, but especially in Fairbanks and to some degree in a few other places. But when you come to Sitka, for example, it was not a very patient group there. They wanted to go "gung ho" as far as we were concerned that's great, I mean we weren't selling patience, we were selling results.

Ginny Wood: The last chapter that organized was Anchorage.

Roger Kaye: Is that right?

Ginny Wood: Yeah, it was started more in Fairbanks and in some of the small communities, and always started with the, "What's the fire in your backyard and what are people worked up about?" If they don't have that, everybody has too many organizations they have to belong to anyway. We didn't ever proselyte, but sometimes we'd send plenty down if we... Well, I remember, they were going to start one in, it wasn't Homer, on the way to Homer...

Bob Weeden: Kenai?

Ginny Wood: Yeah.

Roger Kaye: Kingfisher?

Ginny Wood: Yeah, and that was with Gordon Wright, who was a conductor. We said, "Is anybody going to go down?" And he said, "Well, I will." And we said, "How much money will you need?" He said, "Well, $15.00 for hamburgers and I'll ride my bicycle."

Roger Kaye: Is that right! Well tell me, in Fairbanks here, what were the galvanizing issues that brought you folks together?

Ginny Wood: First it was establishing... that's where we all kind of met and decided when we were asked to testify by a professor at the university just a year after statehood, and it was, 'What were the establishments of the Arctic Refuge?" It wasn't the 1002 area then, that was not the issue. It was whether we should... That's when we all got together.

Bob Weeden: Yeah, yeah. And our very first three major issues were not local Fairbanks issues at all, they were kind of half of the state issues. They were the northern half of the state, because it was AEC out at Point Hope with Project Chariot, and it was Rampart Dam, and it was the Arctic National Wildlife Range and Polar Bears. So yeah, we didn't really start as a local, let's say 'don't pollute the Chena River or quit mining on the Fingers Creeks or something like that.' We started with issues that were distant but big and seemed important to us.

Roger Kaye: So, for the Arctic Refuge, you hadn't been there Bob?

Bob Weeden: I never, no, I hadn't even been there.

Roger Kaye: You probably didn't see yourself benefiting from it. What motivated you to get involved in protecting this remote place?

Bob Weeden: I was at a point where I was just so enthralled with Alaska, the idea of Alaska rather than the knowledge of it. But my idea of Alaska was it's a wild country. And just coming to this place and realizing that there are people who didn't want it to stay wild, that really affronted me. So I began defending whatever seemed to need defending, and I was happy to have other people take the lead and tell me what was needed. You know, whether it was Les Verick and Don Foote, then company over in Point Hope, or whether it was the Murie's. I had met both Olaus and Adolph and Mardy, and of course we knew Brina Kessel and George Schaller. So, just knowing those people, it was okay to say, "Yeah, me too."

Roger Kaye: So, let me ask you Bob, you're a new employee with the state Fish and Game, newly established state that is adamantly against a federal reserve in northeast Alaska, that's strongly against the Arctic Refuge. What problems did that cause for your career, both psychologically for you to deal with it and politically?

Bob Weeden: Well that particular issue didn't cause me any real anguish. As a young biologist within Fish and Game, it didn't bother me if the governor was being silly and opposing any such thing, any such action by Fred Seaton.

It was okay as long as Fish and Game was saying what it was saying. Which was that it obviously couldn't say it was okay to have the Arctic Wildlife Range, but they were just very, very quietly voicing concerns about what would happen if it were developed for mineral or oil and gas. And then also asking questions about access, because they were concerned about maintaining access for hunting, especially hunting, some fishing. But Fish and Game didn't seem to worry about what I did in ACS at that time, that came nine years later and came down kind of hard because things had gotten more politicized by then. But I was okay with that, and I felt that I guess somehow I had the wrong-headed opinion that if I was interested in saving wildlife habitat, that was a good thing to do for Fish and Game. Even if it meant maybe a few hunters not having all of the access they wanted.

Ginny Wood: But remember, we didn't have to worry too much about access unless you had an airplane, and there weren't enough people who owned airplanes.

Roger Kaye: And the balloon-tired Super Cub was barely getting started in those days.

Ginny Wood: Well, I think that the hunting and fishing people thought, "Wow!" I know one person that turned out to be very much against taming the Arctic, but he started out being with us because he said, "We want to go hunting where there aren't going to be a half a dozen other people shooting out rifles where we are." But see, the road system hadn't even hardly been started then. So the idea that you kept something wild, and there wasn't any village except one Eskimo village, which we weren't opposed

to it. Just the idea of the frontier and, of course, the funny part of the thing, a frontier is something where you're pushing civilization further and further. It's not the cowboys or the Indians, it's civilization always wanting to push the frontier, but the idea of having space where there weren't any... Everybody probably then had come up when someplace was getting to crowded or noisy or too many other hunters where they wanted to go. So the idea that there would be a place that was hard to get to and it just bred animals, and there wasn't anybody to object. There were no minerals, no mining, no city, one Eskimo village, and they lived off the sea --- that's all the habitation there was, so you weren't...

Other person: No oil companies?

Ginny Wood: No oil companies, they hadn't discovered oil.

Roger Kaye: You know, that's interesting Ginny, you mentioned the frontier, and both of you have written extensively on the idea of the frontier and whether this venerated self image Alaskans have is really appropriate up here. Bob, what do you think about that?

Bob Weeden: I started off running to be in the frontier. I mean, here I am, a suburban kid in Massachusetts, growing up with probably an overdose of Zane Grey, and I really wanted to come west. I mean, that's where my heart was and I wanted to be, I thought, in the frontier, because I kind of pictured myself at the edge of this frontier, so-called, looking ahead to the place where people hadn't been yet. But what I discovered when I got up here is that there's a whole lot of stuff going ahead where that wave is hitting the sand and a lot of things are churning up, and they're not all together pretty. The frontier, as I understand it now, wherever it exists, still in Australia or in Siberia or in the Canadian north or in Alaska, it exists primarily as a facade to cover greed.

Ginny Wood: That's good.

Bob Weeden: It's touted as 'come visit the frontier' as the image for the tourists to get. But the people who live here fight like heck to change it into something that's not a frontier. I mean they want all of the banks, they want all of the Fred Meyers, they want all of the Home Depots, they want all of this stuff. They want access to everywhere, airplanes everywhere, snowmobiles everywhere. They don't want the frontier, what they want is the opportunity to make it. I found that to be very discouraging, and it still is, but you know, it's part of the...

A person who is daring and adventurous and has courage and who wants to be in a place where you can take risks with little capital, not have to be a banker taking risks with five billion dollars in your pocket, you go out and do it on your own. That's the kind of person that will come to a place that's called a frontier. And when they get there, the main thing is to make a stake, to take the chance to make it. And if you get frustrated meanwhile, then you get angry, and people who are opposing you when you say, "Hey, all I've got to do is get another road out here, I know we'll find the next big copper mine. I mean, it's just sitting there waiting for us." Kennecott, out in the Kobuk, has been waiting for us for 50 years now and all it needs is a road. And then comes along Bob Weeden, who says, "I

don't think roads are a good idea. What will that do to the hunting and fishing?" The native Alaskan says, "I don't think we want a road out there. It's okay where there is one now, but don't make a new one."

So anyway, I feel a frontier is something that attracts the youth in people and something that makes a good story, but it never was pretty. It wasn't pretty in South Africa when the English and the Germans made a frontier out of it. It wasn't pretty in Australia, shooting Aborigines like they were wolves or something. It wasn't pretty in Alaska. It wasn't pretty in Colorado. It's one of these myths that people have in their heads that out runs reality.

Roger Kaye: How about you Ginny? The main statement that you made in your Arctic Refuge testimonial to the senate hearing was that it's no longer a good image for Americans.

Ginny Wood: Did I say that? I don't remember thinking that. Well, I think I agree with Bob. There's another too, all the ne'er-do-wells who couldn't make it, or had a prison record, think of a frontier of where you go and maybe make a new start, but you can just do what you were doing when you got arrested up there because they can't find you. We get the worst and the best. I think the adventurest, the person that the idea that you can come up and not have a bunch of rules and regulations and you want the open space, you want the solitude, you want the wild animals and everything. And then you also have, "Wow, I bet you it's a good place to make a buck and not too honestly." And they come too.

Bob Weeden: Well Ginny, you know, in her whole life, has epitomized this whole thing. She came for those very honest and real and urgent reasons that we just spoke about. She didn't happen to like to become greedy and get stuff, but a lot of people who came for fairly similar reasons just didn't have that. At the watershed, they took a different course.

Ginny Wood: Well, I think that's kind of the universal thing now --- money. No matter how much you really need, I mean poverty is one thing, to really be down and out. That's the worst. But the other is always wanting more, and kind of doing anything to get it. And, you know, you can only spend so much money. But I think for us that came up here, maybe just to look it over. We didn't intend, you hardly ever find anybody that said, "All of my life I wanted to Alaska and stay there." You ask them why they came and you will get a different answer, but very few intended... Well, when I came up almost everybody I met didn't plan to stay. There was an awful lot of people that came up on the GI Bill from World War II, went to university and maybe got a job, and maybe went home, but they never intended to stay.

Bob Weeden: You know, I was one of those who hoped to be able to stay and wanted to stay. Again, for very romantic and maybe silly reasons, but they became pretty solid and compelling the more I lived here. But once, in the early 1970s, a company did a survey, it may have been a university group that did a survey of people in Fairbanks, as to how long they had been here and how long they planned to stay. Half of the people in

Fairbanks had been here ten years or less and half of those were intending to leave within five years. So here's an underlay of unrootedness, restlessness that's in the population. Now that was the 'pipeline days,' but imaging trying to build a community on that. Who's going to vote for a school bond issue when they're going to leave in four years, it's just more taxes while we're here, right? So it's tough to build a community when it's so restless. I never felt that some place was always better than some other place, you know, on a two year basis or a five year and ten year basis. I thought I would be here forever. Well, I wasn't here forever, quite. Ginny comes closer to it. But at least in my heart I have felt that I have brought to every place I've come a feeling that I'd like to make it home, and that's the essential thing. That's where the difference between a person who feels they want to make it home may have to leave, but the person who comes, not being interested in making it a home, is surely going to leave. Not only that, but going to leave turmoil behind.

Ginny Wood: Well, I think you don't come and plan to stay the rest of your life, hardly anybody [does]. But then you find out why they stayed, and lots of them went wherever they went and said, "Gosh, I like it better in Fairbanks." I don't know what they say in Anchorage, it's probably different. But Fairbanks is a very unique community and no matter where they came, if it was like Marty Murie, and she writes in her book when she came when she was nine years old because her father had a job here.

The early days of ferrying --- when I arrived I was delivering an airplane. The only reason I didn't leave is because the weather was bad and it went 50 below and by the time it warmed up, I had a chance to fly some cargo over to Kotzebue and got weathered in over there. It was an Eskimo village and I was charmed by them. The people could live in that cold weather and have lived here for hundreds of years and seemed to have thrived and it just was intriguing. I think you still think, 'Well, I'll stay another year or two years or three years' and then you go outside and when you look around it's like, 'Gosh, I like it better in Alaska.' It kind of dawns on you.

Roger Kaye: It sounds almost like you just haven't found the clear stretch of weather ahead so you can leave!

Ginny Wood: No, I've left. I've gone outside, got married and thought my husband would want to live outside because of what his training was. I met him up here. He was one of those GI's that came up after World War II on the GI Bill.

Roger Kaye: And went to UA [University of Alaska]?

Ginny Wood: Yeah, there were a lot of people up here then, and they were an older. They weren't like the freshman like I went to college with, they were people who had been through the war. Some of them had left at 18 and got drafted and went through four years of hell and just wanted to get away from it all. Didn't want to go home, didn't want to live where they had grown up. They were escaping, really, from a war and came up here. Everything was kind of new and just developing. But most of them always said, "Well, I wouldn't want to spend the rest of my life in Fairbanks, Alaska" and they're still here.

Other: Just to continue, before you ask another question Roger, I'm interested in whether that's the same in other places. That people in our society go places for two years or five years. Is that unique to Fairbanks?

Bob Weeden: Oh, no. There's whole segments of North Americans who intend to move. They may come from a family that for various reasons, either in government or business, they've been posted one place after another as they rose the through the ranks, so they're used to it. Or they, themselves, strike out on that kind of life because their focus is professional or their focus is earning power or whatever it may be. This is one of the things that I feel is seriously wrong with all of North American society, Canada included, is that we are rapidly losing sort of a majority that intends to make a home out of a place. Which is a long-term commitment. And, you know, you can view long-term in any way you want. I'm not talking about the need to bury your head 24/7 for 80 years and then raise kids and keep them chained so they have to stay. I just mean making that full commitment to a place, which includes the community and the land around it. That's not common, it's not common.

Ginny Wood: Well, they're losing the agricultural.

Bob Weeden: I was going to say, if you're born in rural places, many places, you have to get out because there isn't a spot for you there. Then once you get into a city, it may be 50 years before you get back to a rural, and then you're one of the retired old farts that comes and builds a big house back home that isn't really part of the community then either.

Now Judy, and I have noticed it where we are in Salt Spring Island, that there is a percentage, whatever it might be, 20% or something, of the what you call old families who are mainly agricultural and logging families, and some of the people who ran the businesses to serve and provide all of the groceries and everything. So both the merchants and the rural people have this long-term view, several generations view, but on top of that 20%, there is at least 20% at the very top who have come within the last five years, maybe ten years, and built a big retirement home, and it's one of four they have. Barbara Streisand is an example. They're hardly ever there. They build a ten thousand square foot home. There they are, allegedly a part of the community, but they just visit it and dream of getting into the PTA or raising a kid or anything like that. So it's a lovely community to live in, it's very green, and lots of people committed to community, but it's still restless and it's still built on a very restless foundation. It happens to be a place now where it's popular to retire to. So it has, I guess, stability of the retired couple who might stay there until they die, or might not, but they kind of intend to.

Roger Kaye: Would you guys say that this sense of the frontier, this frontier image and identity underlies a lot of projects that ACS was initially was opposed to, like Rampart [Dam], [Project] Chariot, Arctic Refuge?

Bob Weeden: Well, I'll take a crack at that. I think that a lot of them were this El Dorado sort of thing, where people who come to a frontier come for a gold strike in some

form or another. The real gold wasn't really out there. I think the gold era in Alaska, "error," probably lost money. I mean at least between 1890-something and 1980, probably was a losing proposition if you counted the hours spent by people and the money spent, then compared it with the value of the gold taken out, it was a loser.

Ginny Wood: Well, first it was fish and then it was gold and then it was oil.

Bob Weeden: I think that because of the fact that the country disappointed the newcomers so often, it was not full of saleable timber, it was not teaming with saleable fish, it was not as rich as people thought it was. The minerals might have been there but nobody could find, or once they found them, they were too far away to recover. Just everything was a disappointment.

So, you think of the late 50's, brand new state, struggling to make itself financially viable by getting tax revenues and people not having much to pay taxes on. The military expenditures were a godsend, and they were just right for someone to come along and say, "Here's a big project, it will employ hundreds of people and there will be lots of cement poured, so lets pour the cement across the Yukon River." Well, this was a federal idea promoted by the state people because it sounded really good. But it was simply Ernest Gruening taking an idea of the Bureau of Reclamation and saying, "Yep, that's good pork barrel, that will get me elected for a few years, if I'm in favor of this I can do whatever I want." And, in fact, he was a very strong dove in the Vietnam War period, he was for family planning in a time when that was very unpopular. He was allowed to do that by the voters here because he was in favor of Rampart Dam. Well, we had to fight it, it wasn't right, it was stupid.

Roger Kaye: Let's talk about Rampart Dam, that was after the Arctic Refuge, and that was a big issue you guys took on. It must have been very discouraging because even President Kennedy, as popular as he was, supported Rampart Dam. The whole political structure in Alaska did, the business community. I mean, you must have been really underdogs in this. What motivated, what impelled you to take on this huge challenge?

Bob Weeden: Oh, enjoying being the underdog!

Ginny Wood: I mean we were the underdogs to start with! Well, you have to remember that we had a little bit of ego. We didn't do it to be famous, either Bob or I or Celia Hunter or anybody else that got involved, it just was well, we didn't like the way they were doing. In the first place, that would have damned up a lot of the native villages. Even, would you believe, our perpetual...

Bob Weeden: Don Young's.

Ginny Wood: Senator Young had a log cabin, he was a school teacher up in the Yukon, Fort Yukon, and he was on our side. He didn't want that dam. A lot of the natives, the people living along the river because the fish was their subsistence and also their transportation. Even if you were hunting, you went by boat. Anyway, it was kind of

fun to be involved in some of these things. I reflect now, all of the people, the chamber of commerce and all of the people that came up to get rich and the people who said, "There's money it for me," and growth, we just want growth.

If you just stop to analyze it, growth is what's getting too many roads, faster cars, go faster, more roads. And everyone of them brings more... there's a few roads, probably like the one between here and Anchorage was destined to be, and should be, and the road that parallels the railroad. But then all of these others, all they do is go broke trying to maintain them, especially in permafrost and the winters we have.

But anyway, I think the idea of something big and, well, going back to what I was really thinking about and using while I was talking is what if we had put the dam in? If we hadn't bucked and they had the dam across the Yukon River that would back up a lake 200 miles long, what would they have done when they found they oil up there and wanted to get a pipeline down? They'd had to ferry the oil across!

Bob Weeden: You know, I happened to be leader of the statewide waterfowl research at that time, so my first inclination was to think of the ducks. And, of course, the Yukon Flats had been a famous waterfowl breeding area that was well recognized in the 1940's and 50's as being sort of nationwide, first class. In spite of the proclamations of a very good biologist, who was also a banker downtown in Fairbanks, who said ducks don't drown, he was a judge wasn't he, Warren Taylor?

Ginny Wood: Oh yes, right, Warren Taylor.

Bob Weeden: He wrote in the *Fairbanks News Minor* that, "What are they talking about, ducks don't drown." I said, "No they don't, but they don't nest too good in 100 fathoms of water." So anyway, my first thought was that particular biological thing. Then, as I talked with more and more people, the fisheries people knew from Columbia River examples that they weren't going to get the salmon run to stay up above the Yukon Dam. It was not going to happen. It was this 200 mile long still lake that the young salmon would have to navigate to come downstream, and they just weren't going to do it. There was nothing in the project that said they were going to build massive fishways and turbine protectors and whatnot to try to make it work.

It was pretty clear that you were going to substitute a cold lake full of carbon and phosphorous from all of the decaying vegetation, that it was going to be really a dead lake for decades and decades to come. It was going to be ice from probably early in November, because it would be a long time before it froze, but June-July, I mean, you can drive back past even Cologne Lake now and in late June and the ice is just kind of going out, right?

The fisheries people hated it and then all of the folks that realized the trapping and hunting that went on there, even if you airlifted the people and put them on the edge of the lake somewhere, they wouldn't have anything because the lake covered all of the good ground and lapped up against the shores of the these barren hills. The moose wouldn't be

there, the caribou wouldn't be moving through. It was going to be a biological disaster. Any common sense would tell you that it was just laughable on economic grounds.

Ginny Wood: I remember Celica Hunter was debating. We didn't work for the government, one of the few people that didn't work for the government, the university, which is government too, to some extent. So when they wanted a speaker, they'd come to Celia or me because we didn't, they couldn't take our jobs, we didn't have any. But anyway, she was debating, he was a local senator down in Juneau, and he was debating why we should have the Rampart Dam and what it would mean to our economy. Celia got up and she talked about the same thing he talked about, the economics of it, how much it would cost, who would get, what would you do. I mean, you were just putting this big barrier, this 200 mile lake, an artificial lake. Her opponent said, "You're supposed to talk about ducks and you're talking about economics."

Bob Weeden: But that's one. They never could figure out what they were going to do with the electricity, because it was many, many times total state consumption at that time. They had ideas of putting it into a distribution web that would eventually get it down into the Seattle area, which it could, but the line losses would have been absolutely terrific and so it just flat out didn't make any sense.

Ginny Wood: Economics; a lot of times we turn to economics rather than ecology, because that's what everybody's interested in and we proved that this is economically not feasible. There was one... you were up here then when the outfit that was going to come up and project, what did they call it where they were going to take the four major river and turn them around and send them down to the desiccated southwest? They really actually did, they were up here pushing it.

Bob Weeden: They wanted to do it.

Ginny Wood: The minute you get something like that, you have all of the people --- money, people, growth. Yes, let's do it!

Bob Weeden: It was called the North American Water and Power Alliance [NAWAPA] and the engineering company was the Ralph and Parson Engineering. They were backed, among other people, by the Wenatchee Herald Newspaper. They really got this thing going and for awhile it was quite an amazing project. I mean from an engineering standpoint it was just exciting, because it would take all of the Yukon water back down into the Fraser Valley Trench, The Rocky Mountain Trench, and then from there they would distribute it east to the Great Lakes in order to deepen the water in the Great Lakes.

Ginny Wood: Oh, I hadn't heard that.

Bob Weeden: Yeah, so that the St. Lawrence Seaway would have more water and they could have deeper draft vessels. Then they would send it down to California and water the desert. It was an amazing idea. They didn't talk about the cost too much. I remember a fellow in Canada at the time named Frank Quinn, who wrote an article

called, "*The North also thirsts*," which tells the story right there, you know, don't think about water folks, it's ours, we need it, we're going to keep it.

Ginny Wood: Do you remember when Hinkle was governor and he was almost buying in to capture the icebergs and send them down for drinking water to the places where people were running out of water?

Other: What time period was NAWAPA?

Bob Weeden: The late 1950s, right through much of the 60s. It was just kind of kicking around.

Ginny Wood: It kept cropping up.

Bob Weeden: Yeah, I think I remember the first report or headline, it was about 1958.

Ginny Wood: Before we had oil, now everything's oil.

Bob Weeden: Well, it will be water again. They'll use oil to pump the water is what will happen because, yeah, a big one.

Roger Kaye: Bob, how did your job at Fish and Game... you worked for Fish and Game during Rampart era didn't you?

Bob Weeden: Yes, yes.

Roger Kaye; How did your work there relate to ACS? Did you do any leaking or were you able to be forthright in bringing the Fish and Game information to ACS?

Bob Weeden: I don't...

Ginny Wood: We just changed that, we just elected somebody else president for that time.

Bob Weeden: I don't remember having... You know, at that point I was not aware of any sort of negative pressure from Juneau. As a matter of fact, a good friend of mine, Jim Brooks, James Washington Brooks, was the Division of Game head, so he was my boss. And Sigurd Olson was the...

Ginny Wood: Sig Olson, Jr.

Bob Weeden: He was the Cooperative Wildlife, the Pittman-Robertson [Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration] coordinator, and they weren't going to be coming down hard on me until things got really hot for them. It didn't happen during this Rampart thing, I think partly because people were recognizing at all levels of politics that it just wasn't

going to happen. I mean you could scream and yell and have headlines and whatnot, but you weren't going to have a dam.

Ginny Wood: You could be denounced.

Bob Weeden: Yeah. So I just didn't have a problem them. The problem came during the oil times and it was when it was clear that exciting things were happening on the north slope after the 1968 discovery by Atlantic Richfield. Immediately I began getting letters from folks in Fish and Game, Jack Lentfer and Ron Somerville and others saying, "Boy, I think this is going to be really serious for us." Thinking of the caribou, thinking of the fish crossings and all of that sort of stuff.

Roger Kaye: And this is primarily the pipeline?

Bob Weeden: Yeah, the pipeline and, of course, the development on the Arctic slope, which we couldn't picture in our heads because we didn't have a knowledge of what an oil field looked like. We were assured that it wouldn't look like west Texas, because in west Texas the nearness of the wells and the number of little driveways to them is dependent on the size of the private parcels. Well, up there is was huge leases, so they said, "Oh, we'll be just very efficient, we won't cover much ground with gravel." All that kind of stuff. Anyway, we just didn't know. But it was the problem of building the pipeline that seemed to us to be the big thing.

Well, in my ACS role I was sort of able to pick up arguments about this pipeline problem that weren't really related directly to game or wildlife or biology. For example, when Art Lockenbrook came out with his famous detailed study of the effect of heated oil pipeline going through permafrost in Geological Survey, it was the paper that really turned the world around at that time, because all of the oil folks were used to building pipelines, 48 inch pipeline, we do it all of the time. But they were building them in Saudi Arabia and they were building them in Texas and so on and so forth. They weren't building them in permafrost. The Russians were very mum about the oil spills that they were having from pipes that were separating and all of that sort of stuff.

So when Lockenbrook came out with that and people like Larry Mayo had enough knowledge of ice and engineering that they could say, "Yes, that's really a problem." We began talking more and more with the scientists in the University of Alaska. We realized that that was something that had to be solved before any pipeline was built, so we were trying for time. Well, I was able to bring those things out, to act like a reporter and just go and ask questions. That was the one time when [it was actually by then I was with the University of Alaska, 1970-1971] William A. Wood called me up to his office and said...

Roger Kaye: He was president of the university?

Bob Weeden: Yes, president of the university. He said, "You know Bob, tell me about this pipeline business. We've had some complaints from folks downtown that you're talking about the pipeline and that you don't like it." I said, "Yep, that's right." He said, "Why?" And I told him why and he said, "Well, you know, I've been talking with

Chuck Behlke and he kind of agrees with you [he was in the engineering department at the time]." Anyway, we had this chat and to his credit he said, "I'm getting flack from the businessman downtown who want the university to be quiet. As far as I'm concerned you can go on and keep on saying what you have said because I can find no reason why you shouldn't. It's within your prerogative as an academic to say these things."

Ginny Wood: Oh really!

Bob Weeden: So anyway, I actually got backing from him. That was the one time when I got really upfront direct sort of people calling me and putting me on the carpet. Now indirectly, a couple of years earlier, Augie Reetz, who was the Commissioner of Fish and Game, he had been appointed by Walter Hickel. Who did he replace? Walk Kirkness? I've forgotten. Actually, yeah, I think it was. In any case, Augie Reetz, whose knowledge of biology was thin and scattered, decided to send out a memo to all of the troops saying, "You could not be an officer of..." and he listed the Sierra Club, the Alaska Conservation Society, and I forgot whether he included Audubon.

Ginny Wood: The Wilderness Society.

Bob Weeden: The Wilderness Society, yeah. He didn't mention anything about the Miners Association or the Sportsman's Association or the chambers of commerce. That was okay, I guess. But you couldn't be an officer in these other groups. And I said, "Whoops, wait a minute, that doesn't sound right to me." So I got the Alaska Public Employee's Association [APEA] at the time, it's the Union, on my side and they saw the danger of that kind of a thing across the board. Any commissioner writing such a thing would have affronted the same principle. So they began producing a lot of flack and finally, although I quit over it, I just said that for now I'm going to resign from ACS, which I did, but I'm under protest and I'm on my way. So I guess it was six or eight or ten months later that I had an opportunity to go as a conservation lobbyist for the three groups and I spent 1970 lobbying, and that was the opportunity to leave. But, meanwhile, the up reward was great enough that Augie Reetz he passed onto greener pastures, I don't mean heaven, I think he just went to some other place. But the fellow who took over there kept the executive order on the books, but he never enforced it, but he wouldn't ever take it off the books either. So it was kind of a stalemate. For all I know it's still on the books, I don't know. But it really was one of those things that made me realize that my long-term home was probably not Fish and Game but the university. Where I could, I guess, think about a broader range of things then ptarmigan and biology and waterfowl, and also I love to teach, but also be freer to speak out.

Ginny Wood: Well, it was lots of fun! We could pass in the ACS, we could pass the officers around, you know, so that no one had an ego that wanted to be particularly. Celia Hunter was usually the secretary, so she didn't have a job that was in danger.

Bob Weeden: Only that job. For awhile she was volunteering and then she was paid a pittance. You know, I remember one example of this trading jobs bit --- in the year in which the Creamer's Field [Migratory Waterfowl Refuge] proposal came up to be purchased by the state. Jim King of the Fish and Wildlife Service, who lived in Fairbanks

at the time, had come to me and said, "You know Bob, that place would make a great refuge." Well, Jim had come up in 1948 to work for Charlie Creamer as a milk hand, a milker, and he liked the place, of course. So, by the early mid-1960's when Charlie Creamers Dairy had too many bugs in the milk and he couldn't sell milk anymore, it was for sale. Jim King thought that it would make a good refuge, and I thought so too. I was in a good position in Fish and Game to sort of promote it as a waterfowl refuge of some sort, but what we needed was a community organization to take it over as a project and raise money for it and get it done politically. Well, I happened to be the president of the ACS at that time, so what we did is Dan Swift took over as president and I dropped to vice president and Dan was then the front person for all of the meetings that we had on Creamers Field. Meanwhile, I found that John Butrovich was very much in favor of this refuge. It was kind of a nice clean thing. He was a duck hunter, he had gone out to Minto Flats a lot and hunted with Dick McIntyre and he had a lot of power and enjoyed using the political power. But he thought, "You know, Charlie Creamer will get his dollars, the kids will have a place to watch ducks, the snowmobilers will be out there in the winter and the dog musher's. It will be good for the town. It's not saleable real estate. Every time you dig a hole there you get water." So anyway, everything sounded good to him. It would be federal or state money doing it. So he was on our side and all we had to do in the ACS was to get the option money. This is where Mary Shields had her class out making cookies and selling cookies at cookie sales.

Ginny Wood: Mary didn't even have a car then, but she had her dog, Cabbage, with little packs. She'd go into the grocery store and get a whole bunch of boxes of cake mix and then went on College Road [then you could stop anywhere on College Road and it wouldn't cause a traffic backup]; she would go up and down college road and people would stop and she'd give them cake mix and you were supposed to bake a cake. Usually it was some kids group, and then they had a little grocery store.

Bob Weeden: The College Inn?

Ginny Wood: Yeah. And so they had the kids down there selling the cake. Anyway, they had a snow storm and so there was a little grocery store and they invited the kids to come in. But Mary just went up and down the street and anybody that stopped, you baked a cake and took it down, I mean everybody got in the act. One of the strongest to help was the ladies garden club. They came, and they also saved the rocks.

Bob Weeden: Oh, the Grapefruit Rocks.

Ginny Wood: The Grapefruit Rocks. That's the only kind of a picnic spot on the whole... swamp or trees. And then there was the start of the alpine club, and that's the one place you can practice belaying on granite. Between the ladies garden club, they stopped putting... they were going to put a communication center and so the ladies garden club and alpine club stopped that.

Bob Weeden: They were also involved in raising money for Creamers Field? Is that you were saying?

Ginny Wood: No, but I was just saying how a small, it's another example.

Bob Weeden: I was going to mention that it was quite a time for Fairbanks as a community. The 1967 flood had put a four foot mark on everybody's wall in greater Fairbanks, so there was a lot of cost to private individuals, and it was the time that the St. Joe's Body Shop really needed to be replaced. So they were raising funds for the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, and at the same time we were trying to get this money. It was really only a few thousand dollars, five or six or seven thousand dollars or something, it doesn't seem like much now, but it sure seemed like a lot then.

Ginny Wood: It sure was a lot then.

Bob Weeden: So it almost seemed highly improbable that we would be able to collect that public money for this little refuge and sort of...

Ginny Wood: It's the place where the ducks, even then the geese and ducks would come in in the spring and everybody went down to watch. It was part of the spring thing that you did, just go down and watch them come in. You had a lot of people who wouldn't have cared much about environmental things, but we wanted a place to go down and watch spring. It was the start of spring, go down and watch the ducks and geese come in.

Bob Weeden: This was an example of things that happened where the ACS here was partly a statewide organization, partly a local chapter, but it spawned people who would grab onto a project and run with it on their own. For example, the real story of Creamer's Field comes after it was purchased, and then the whole development of it with the boardwalks and the nature orientation and the feeding of the birds and stuff. All of that was done by people like Gail Mayo and Larry Mayo and lots of others, who were coming at it from the standpoint of, what was it, Arctic Audubon Society had it as a project.

Ginny Wood: Oh, they became very...

Bob Weeden: And Friends of Creamer's Field was formed and so on. It was nothing that ACS had to keep on the official books, because it was going to keep going as a community project and keep rolling and evolving.

Ginny Wood: The other thing that was just happenstance is that all that he's been discussing took place and we got it, even the governor, I think it was Hickel, came in and backed, and the chamber of commerce.

Bob Weeden: I think Petrovich was the republican.

Ginny Wood: But if we had only, and we got that just the year before the pipeline started and they didn't have anyplace to put the pipe, that would have been the perfect place to the pipe, it's right near the railroad. That belonged to them, and that would have been a prime development, the town would have just gone that way. We got it, what he

talked about. It was just happenstance, by a few people working on it and a few organizations and sort of just a community thing that just sort of grew. Before, if you weren't for it, well you're not one of us, even the chamber of commerce. Then, if it had been a year later, they would have said, "Well, that land we could sell it to the pipeline company." And they could have then that would have been when we would have a little house on every half acre or every few feet I suppose by then. It would have been prime saleable property. We just got it the year before. That was lucky.

Roger Kaye: Does anyone know, as an aside, whether any the Creamer family is still in Fairbanks?

Ginny Wood: Yeah, every once in awhile. His son didn't like this. Now anything they have, anything to do with it, [one of my best friends is Friends of Creamer's Dairy] every time they have some occasion there he's asked to make a speech. He's changed, he talks about growing up there, he would talk about the old days.

Roger Kaye: You know, that's really good though. It's funny how people will change and evolve as the times change and things that didn't look good from your life from one perspective at 40, look a lot more fun at 70.

Ginny Wood: Well now he's older and he's Charlie Creamer's son. He remembers the old so he will be asked to give a speech and he loves it!

Other: I have a question, you know Roger, you're always asking about this issue or that issue that ACS was successful at. Were there issues that you fought against where you lost?

Bob Weeden: The pipeline.

Ginny Wood: The pipeline, yeah.

Bob Weeden: Yeah, we lost lots. And many of the wins, at least the big ones, were not because of us. I mean, Edwin Teller didn't back off from Project Chariot because of the Alaska Conservation Society. Rampart Dam was not built because we opposed. It was not built because it was ridiculous and federal money wasn't going to be spent in Alaska on a big dam. It was past the big dam era, they'd all been built and nobody wanted any big ones anymore. And so we lost lots. I would say the wins that we had, and of course it's a cliché in conservation that you can win one time right after another, but you only lose once. Once it's gone it's gone. That's not strictly speaking true, but it's certainly to a great deal true. But I think for a local area and all of the other areas, whether it's Petersburg and the Petersburg Creek issues, all of the areas where conservation groups operate, they lose a lot and they win some.

Roger Kaye: Going back to one of the early issues, predator control and the bounty system, both of you were active in that and both of you felt strongly about it. How did you happen to become involved in it?

Ginny Wood: Well, we were there in economics. We didn't try to fight it on ecological things or save the wolves. How much bounty are you paying off to whom? Then we had, actually we had two senators that were republicans down there, and when they looked in the economics of it they said, "God, this is costing us a lot of money and what are we getting?" The natives weren't killing female wolves. They knew they were worth money hatching more wolves. So I think lots of times we really stressed the economics of it, none of us were particularly good at that.

Roger Kaye: But that wasn't your motivation, the economics, was it? That was the argument.

Ginny Wood: No, but that was the thing that you could win on, and you still can.

Bob Weeden: Well, I was fresh from reading Aldo Leopold and, you know, when you read *Thinking like a mountain* and then when you're reading, as a boy reads, all the westerns, I mean the wolves have a very special place and very often they're harassed by folks, shot by the cowboys, etcetera, etcetera?

Roger Kaye: Did you read Seton by any chance?

Bob Weeden: Oh, yeah.

Ginny Wood: I did.

Roger Kaye: If I can interrupt just a second, tell me about Seton and what you read as a child and what the influence may have been on your view of predators.

Ginny Wood: The *Two Little Savages* and *Rolf in the Woods* and what was the other...

Other: For those of us who don't know who Seton is...

Bob Weeden: Ernest Thompson Seton.

Other: What kind of books were they?

Ginny Wood: Kind of half children's books, but more teenager books.

Other: Like adventure books or nature books?

Ginny Wood: Nature books and well, they were different. *Rolf in the Woods* was about an orphan kid that grew up before the Revolutionary War who was adopted by an Indian.

Bob Weeden: It was kind of a combination, a hybrid you might say, between Beatrice Potter and *Peter Cottontail* and Farley Mowat, both are fiction. And there's Earnest Thompson Seton, who's a Canadian by the way, who wrote these books for

children, youngsters, about animal and he anthropomorphized the fox --- he gave them persona and adventures. But he was also a very good observer and he knew a lot about animal, wild animal behavior, so it gave them sort of an honesty to them. He was very, very well known and was sort of a classic nature writer.

Ginny Wood: Yeah, I read all of them when I was a kid.

Roger Kaye: So, he was an influence in your life as well? And Ginny has talked about his influence with her.

Bob Weeden: Yeah, yeah. He wasn't as big an influence for me. I didn't read *The Two Little Savages*. I know I would have listed it as one of his title, but I didn't ever read.

Ginny Wood: And *Rolf in the Woods*.

Bob Weeden: But, I think that, I forget, *Lobow, The King of Currumpaw* is the name of a short story about wolves, and he had several stories about wolves that came to bad ends usually; somebody trapped them or shot them.

Ginny Wood: He had what you called woods craft, that the boy scouts and the girl scouts and the campfire girls. Woods craft, it means how to go out and make bow beds --- I couldn't imagine going out and cutting down trees to make bough beds. That was the first camping trip I went on, you made the bough bed.

Roger Kaye: Express an ethic about wildlife related to that...

Ginny Wood: Well, sometimes it was fictionized and it was for young ones. Other times he had ones that were really for adults.

Bob Weeden: Yeah, well I did come with an inclination to want to see wolves and to admire them, and never seen one and never thought I would be so lucky. But then I also went through biology at universities, wildlife conservation at universities, where the professionals just beginning to question predator control and Paul Errington's work on muskrats in Iowa, showing that mink do kill lots of muskrats, but never killed them out. So he had found lots of evidence that there is this uneasy and shifting balance between the prey and predator. So we were beginning to question all of the bounties that Pennsylvania had on foxes and Alaska had on wolves.

Ginny Wood: Then comes along Aldo Leopold.

Bob Weeden: When I got to Alaska and discovered that the federal government had a bounty system and the poisoning process, lots of people poisoning wolves. Who was the fellow in Palmer [Alaska] who killed all of the wolves by poison in the Nelchina? A very famous...

Ginny Wood: I guess I don't remember.

Roger Kaye: *Frank Glaser?*

Bob Weeden: No, no it wasn't Frank. I remember I met him in early May of 1956, he took me up the Little Talkeetna, a Little Susitna road, and I went into the area to look for ptarmigan. That was my first year hunting ptarmigan.

Ginny Wood: At one time, when my husband was a ranger in the park for a year, before he decided he didn't want to be moved to Yosemite, all of the rangers were to shoot any wolf on site. Some of them thought that it was great sport and others, like my husband, never saw a wolf. He could go out with the dog and never see one. I remember one guy that...

Roger Kaye: *Gosh, there was a fresh track, but...!*

Ginny Wood: One of the rangers, a young ranger, thought this was just great --- carried a gun and come home with a sled load of dead wolves. Woody and a couple of other rangers put him all on his front porch, propped up, you know, dead wolves.

I think that the wolf thing that we won one just to looking to see how much you're paying out, where is it going. Sometimes the economics was something that could win, where the ecology wouldn't.

Female: *As Roger said, that's not why you were against it.*

Roger Kaye: *No, the motives.*

Female: *What motivated you to oppose it?*

Ginny Wood: Just being around them, I guess, McKinley Park. And then I think Aldo Leopold, when he writes about when he was a young ranger in the Gila [National Forest] and having shot a wolf, because that's what you were supposed to do, and went down and saw the green eyes...

Bob Weeden: The green fire dying inside.

Ginny Wood: The fire in his dying eyes, right. That sticks with you. When I was living in McKinley Park... I think for me, it's ironic that they make a varmint out of the very first animal that mankind, when he became homosapien, invited into his hearth to be part of his family and still they make him a varmint. Something you have to kill. He's dangerous, he might eat your child, I mean all of these myths. But yet, they're like dogs in all sizes.

Bob Weeden: They do eat children! Well again, I don't know exactly sort of why, but wolf bounty was finally taken off. But I think it was doomed because the fresh crop of people in State Fish and Game, were kind of in control. It was not a migratory game bird, it was going to be managed by the state and all of the young biologists wanted to get

rid of the bounty, certainly wanted to get rid of the poisoning, and that was done immediately. But it took about four or five years to finally to get the bounty off.

Ginny Wood: I think it was economics.

Bob Weeden: Oh, I don't think so. The state could afford those few dollars. But the thing is that at that time there were relatively few people, quite a lot of game. In the 1960's it was good hunting for everybody. North of the Yukon there were no limits on the number of caribou you could take because there was no access for anybody but those who lived there. So it was really, in hindsight, it was a time when we could afford to relax a bit on stuff like wolves. The Game Division got the Board of Game to classify wolves in their very first session as game animals rather than as varmints or nuisance game or unclassified game is one of the euphemisms they use. Then it was a battle to fight the specific legislators in the southeast and in central Alaska, who just hated wolves or had constituents who hated wolves and just clung to the very last. There was a fellow in southeast who insisted once, in the mid to late 1960s, that Fish and Game hired helicopters to go out and shoot wolves along the shore in the island where he hunted deer. That kind of thing was sort of the last little flare-up of the fire had died back. Well now, of course, we don't have a bounty, but we've got Fish and Game biologist who, whatever the think, are running scared in front of the native and non-native hunters who say they want to kill more moose and caribou Therefore, you've got to get rid of all of the wolves. We're back killing wolves, probably more of them then were killed by poisons. It's a little bit ironic.

Ginny Wood: Yeah, and poisons you got everything. I think a funny story was Frank Glaser, who thought that only a good wolf was a dead wolf. He came out with ecolites, well one of them is down in Juneau down, was just here at the university. So they came out because the Crislers [Herb and Lois] were staying us and they had their wolves, the five they had, they were over at Celia's cabin. I happened to be over there when he came with his class and Celia's dog, which was a sled dog, was lying on the front porch. I heard him say, "Now, you can see that that is a wolf." He came out to see the wolves because the Crisler had them staked out over at her place.

Roger Kaye: This is Herb and Lois Crisler?

Ginny Wood: Lois, yes. So I was sitting out there and I heard Glaser say to his class that had come out to see the wolves, and he was looking at Celia's dog, which was on the front porch, the other wolves were staked out behind in the woods, he said, "Now you can see that that is a wolf, not a dog."

Roger Kaye: And explaining carefully why.

Bob Weeden: I had another incident about that same thing. It was a little bit hard to tell, especially when there was only a front foreleg to show for the bounty, that's what you had to have, and was it ears or scalp or something?

Ginny Wood: No, ears it was supposed to be.

Bob Weeden: Yeah, but also the front leg. The Fish and Game required that you bring that in for sealing to sort of proof it.

Ginny Wood: It was $50.00, a bounty of $50.00.

Bob Weeden: Anyway, one time I was in the Fairbanks Fish and Game office as a biologist there, and a man came in. I know his name, but I won't mention it because he may still be alive. He came in with eight wolves that he had just landed and shot in winter on the Chatanika River. Peter E. K. Shepherd was a biologist at the time in the office who showed us how he would process for bountying. He looked at them and he kind of looked at me and he looked at the dogs, the animals, and he said, "Well, okay, we'll bounty them for you." So he certified to the bounty, but then after this guide left Pete said, "That was a sled dog team and I'll bet you anything we hear about it." A day later this trapper came in from the Chatanika and he said, "You know what, I couldn't believe it, this guy landed and shot all of my dogs!" We said, "Oh dear, isn't that terrible." Well, we didn't want to get into a contest between this trapper who lost his dogs and the hunter who shot them. We just thought, 'Well, it will blow over." Which it did, and the state was out $50.00 x 8 [$400.00].

Roger Kaye: Well, Bob, it seems to me like, very much like Aldo Leopold, you combined ecological and philosophical insights in your work. Is that true do you think?

Bob Weeden: I guess lately, I guess when you can't do anything anymore you turn to philosophy, right?

Roger Kaye: Well, I look at your book, it was written in the '70's and it's very philosophical, I guess you go beyond the specifics of the animals, to what it means. What it means to people.

Bob Weeden: Well you remember, Roger, that in my teaching that I kind of, I was just extremely lucky in given the chance by all of my university bosses, Fred Dean and Bonita Neiland mostly, to design courses that I liked to teach. I taught wildlife biology and then I taught wildlife politics. Then I began thinking, you know, what really affects wildlife up here is how land is used and therefore, since most of it is federal or state land, then land use planning is really kind of the crux of where decisions are made. So, I began developing courses with land use planning in them. Then I said, "Oh, wait a minute, there's economics behind that," because the planning is driven by oil discoveries or mineral discoveries or timber or fish or something. Therefore, I aught to know something about natural resource economics, and that began to show up in the classes. Then I thought to myself, 'But you know, these decisions are still made by politicians somewhere about how to use federal and state land, and what I'd like to teach is how science has any role in, if at all, in making these decisions about public land.' The reason I had to bring this sort of science question was that I was almost teaching pure political science, and I wouldn't have been allowed to by the political science department. But they had no interest in teaching in what I was teaching, but it was okay since I sort of disguised it. But I had natural resource politics, natural resource legislation, all of those

things. But then I finally said, "Okay," this is after a few years of teaching this you get set of ideas in your mind and you build up a picture of how the world works, and then something comes along, an insight or conversation with somebody, and another whole world develops. Well, I realized that as far as my mind would go, probably is to ask the question, "Why do we think the way we do towards nature, why do people do stupid things like killing wolves and so on?"

I realized that if you really traced it back in our society, there are three big things --- Christianity and what religion says about the relation of people and nature and God; there is capitalism, which is our system for getting and distributing money; there is science, which is a brand new invention of humanity, which drives a lot of what we do, and its got its good sides and its bad sides. But those three things together are why we act the way we do about most things.

Obviously, there is an emotional base to everything. But a lot of those emotions are based on things that affront our inner most thoughts about, you know, man has dominion over nature and if anybody says that I don't, I am man, than I'm very much affronted. I shouldn't have to keep out of this area because it should be wilderness, I want to have dominion over it. It echoes far back in Sunday school, right.

So I began teaching a course in environmental ethics, which asked the question, "How do we picture this universe? How do we picture the place we live in? How do we react/act towards it and why?" And so that's how I began and that's where I ended my career in teaching. But that began as I was teaching it, I was also learning about it, because the kids, of course, have just as much right to talk about their orientations and feelings and philosophies as I did. All of this stuff kind of mixed all together and it would come out in a little bit and that promises to keep a lot more in messages from earth and then stuff I've written since then, mostly short essays, it comes out even fuller blown.

Ginny Wood: Mostly in Canadian publications? I haven't run across any.

Bob Weeden: Well, yeah. Ginny, I'll send some stuff up, because we've got a bulletin that's almost exactly the same as the Alaska Conservation Bulletin/Review. It's the...

Ginny Wood: You mean Salt Spring Island?

Bob Weeden: On Salt Spring Island. It's called the Acorn because we have Garry oaks there on Salt Spring Island. I've been editing it for awhile and therefore I can write whatever I want. If I have to submit to another editor there's always a question whether it will get published. But anyway, I've written a lot of stuff and it's fun writing. But I find that a lot of things out of family living, out of the newspapers, out of just all of these past experiences that we've shared, stuff kind of starts to come together and you begin really asking, you know, "Why do I behave this way? Why do I think this way?"

Ginny Wood: Do you know Orion Magazine?

Bob Weeden: Yeah, I do.

Ginny Wood: Write for it.

Bob Weeden: Orion and Orion Afield, I think.

Ginny Wood: They dropped and it's just Orion. It's very expensive, but pick it up. I can see you writing. I don't think you make much money out of it, but you will find a lot of people you know writing something. Really good philosophical stuff, not always environmentally orientated, but it's talking about the same things you're talking about.

Bob Weeden: People I admire. Alaskans like John Haines and Richard Nelson, for a couple of examples, people that have come out of some particular channel in life and get to the point where it's kind of like a caddis fly larvae, collecting all of these little fragments around and then walking around with this house that it lives, made of fragments. Well, they live in this house of fragments and they understand and they begin to see how it was pieced together. Richard Nelson is a wonderful writer and it's the kind of the thing I would like to be able to do. It's the type of thinking I would like to be able to do.

Roger Kaye: It certainly is. I know you succeeded, Ginny, as editor of the Alaska Conservation Review.

Ginny Wood: No, we traded back and forth.

Bob Weeden: We traded, yeah.

Ginny Wood: The only thing anybody ever had me in, officer or anything, was because everybody else worked for the government, I didn't. I couldn't lose my job!

Bob Weeden: A good writer and a good editor, and Woodsmoke outlasted the Review and the Conservation Review.

Ginny Wood: I remember a story that reminds me of, Fred Dean and I... You were out doing fieldwork, the same place you did.

Bob Weeden: Eagle Summit?

Ginny Wood: Yeah, and then they didn't plow the road. We had some big issue coming up, I think it probably was the one on using the H-bomb for Project Chariot, I can't remember, but Fred was the only one in town, and I think he may have been the president. Well, he was something. Anyway, he and I were sitting at that table writing about this and it was going to be the whole issue. We said, "We have to get Bob's permission." I mean, it went past him. So I think it was Les Viereck that skied in to get your permission.

Bob Weeden: He came down the hill off the ski sideway or something.

Ginny Wood: Yeah, right, where the part that wasn't, you were isolated because they didn't plow the whole thing and I think we got Les to ski in and get your permission and you said, "Let it fly." I think that was the one we had the issue that finally got back to the secretary of interior.

Bob Weeden: I know there was a whole issue on Rampart Dam, there was a whole issue on Project Chariot.

Ginny Wood: Yeah, I don't know which it was, I think it was the...

Bob Weeden: Project Chariot?

Ginny Wood: Anyway, the thing we needed was your okay, because you were either with Fish and Game or off at the university. I don't know which.

Bob Weeden: Fish and Game probably.

Ginny Wood: Fish and Game, and we didn't think we should... I think you were also president then, maybe, I can't remember. We rotated a lot. The only time that Celia and I were something was when it was when your jobs were in jeopardy because of the issue.

Female: But it's interesting that both of you did a lot of writing. You wrote for the newsletter and for other things, and not all activists do that kind of writing.

Roger Kaye: You both did. And looking at record you started a very philosophical approach towards conservation and the other people, many other contributors wrote more scientifically. Both of you, and I'm looking at you Bob, when you took over as editor here, continued this trend of not only saying what's at risk, but what's it mean in the larger scheme of things, which is what interested me in both of your approaches. But we've been talking about the economic arguments that we've used, and sometimes at the main ones. But Bob, it's interesting, in 1962, you wrote an article, a two page article for the ACS Review which said, Weeden on Selling Wilderness, and I should have shown you this before we talked here, but you're point was this...

Bob Weeden: Am I going to be disturbed?

Roger Kaye: No, I think it's really interesting, I'd like you to comment on it, you're saying that we try to save wilderness and wildness by talking about the business aspects and the economic benefits, but you conclude here, and I'll just quote, you said, "This dollar determination," and you're talking about the benefit and the argument, 'it goes too far, it cheapens us." You're basically arguing that we have to speak from the heart what we really believe, and the wilderness shouldn't be determined on basically financial basis.

Bob Weeden: Well, for all of the lifetimes of several civil rights movements,

reforms movements; whether it's feminism or civil rights or environmentalism, arguments of convenience, where you use the language that seems to be most likely to be understood by your audience. It's either political power or it's economics, because one of the few things governments can do is distribute money, right? They listen to economic arguments. So, we've always used those things, but every single one of those is vastly deeper, more meaningful human issue, you know any of those that I mentioned and many others. So we're caught in that. Someone, as a matter of fact, after Al Gore lost the election in 2000...

Ginny Wood: If he really did.

Bob Weeden: If he really did. Someone wrote a very searching, either large article or book, about the possibility that the "Greenies" have really lost the war even while winning battles, because they have taking these shallower arguments of convenience and not insisted on talking about their central values. Because it was the values thing that became extremely prominent, and it seemed as though the Republicans captured the whole idea of values, human values, and in a time of confusion...

Ginny Wood: Mostly monetary values.

Bob Weeden: It's nice to be... No, they're talking about family values and all of these things, just the right to speak out as if you were friends of God, I mean all of these things. But it seems to me that the Democrats wanted to talk about issues, and issues are defined in a narrower bucket, a smaller bucket. They're defined by economics and who's land, it's some physical thing that's at stake here. But the actual human background of why it's important to do this is often just lost, because it seems to general, to motherhoody, to something or other.

It is interesting to have you read that, because I came back to it just a couple of months ago in something I wrote which said that I am personally finally coming around to being comfortable talking about why I really feel the way I feel. It's maybe the first time in my life I've really been wanting to do that because I see how important it is, both to me and to other people. Sometimes it's these simple things that are the most powerful in all of this stuff that requires a detailed knowledge of engineering or biology or economics or genetics or whatever it is, that's kind of at a different level, isn't it? You have to play that game, otherwise you're out in cloud nine and nobody listens to somebody who levitates up to cloud nine and just doesn't know how to get back down to earth. But on the other hand, if that's all you are is a technician, comparing this with that and saying this is slightly better than that on the basis of abstract arguments, it just isn't going to hack it.

Ginny Wood: I think that's what grabbed us when we first started thinking ecologically, without even knowing what the word meant. It was Aldo Leopold, that's the essence. Very practical.

Bob Weeden: Sure, yep. He was a very good practical biologist too, but he had this larger sense of...

Ginny Wood: Yeah, and also the vocabulary to just touch you.

Roger Kaye: How's that Ginny, how did it touch you?

Ginny Wood: Well, you could read by, you know, when you first hear about ecology and you start reading text book type stuff or somebody that's an expert or a biologist or an expert, and you pick up Aldo Leopold. I never heard of the guy, I just happened to pick up the book. It was down at the park, we the park library, and I started reading it and, wow! He has the, without being holier-than-thou, without being too scientific or trying to be funny or trying to be I speak your language type... I knew something about Aldo Leopold I think you can pick up any of the things that he has written and he speaks to you, even though it's been years. But people who don't know what ecology is and what environmentalism is and all of that, but there is something about his writing, that he doesn't get too academic and neither does he get, you know, this is the answer. He was just a good writer and had a way of using words that just get to you.

Bob Weeden: I picked up a book called *Scientist Debate Gaia* not long ago. It's a 2004 book, I think.

Ginny Wood: Who wrote it?

Bob Weeden: It's quite scientific. It's a bunch of people who wrote, starting from the beginning with [James] Lovelock and [Lynn] Margulis and so on. But in one of the essays there they refer back very respectful to Aldo Leopold and his comment about saving all of the pieces, that kind of thing. So he had managed, in the 1930s and 1940s and early 1950s, to really say some things that have lasted and will last, you know, a century or more.

Roger Kaye: Ginny, when I talked about the Arctic Refuge, you told me how you discovered Leopold. You said at that time what really connected you was his linking of ecological thinking to the concept and I can almost quote you, "that man is a member of a community of life and that's what connected you as a non-biologist to Leopold." Does that work for you Bob?

Bob Weeden: Oh yeah, yeah, very much. Well, first of all, people are a community of life when you think of our bodies and all of the parasites that we host and the things we eat and take in and so. That we are a community of life.

Ginny Wood: Really, when you find out that there's just one or two brownie points between us and the apes or any other particular animal, our gene pool is about the same.

Bob Weeden: We were clever at it, we are a community of life in another way. I've got somebody's arm and somebody else's knee and maybe a frontal lobe from somebody else and a hind toe from somebody else. I don't know how many points each

of them is going to get debit or a credit at Saint Peters at the pearly gates. Let's see Bob, some of you passes, but boy other parts of you are a real bummer.

Anyway, I wrote, I think it was an economic argument, I wrote an article once for Fish and Game Magazine called *On Wooden Nickels Trojan Horses and Lonely Drummers* and I had been asked to contribute kind of a keynote thing to a symposium on whether or not Fish and Game should be trying to hire economists to figure out how much a sport fish is caught by a sport fisherman versus caught in a net by a commercial fisherman. All of that kind of translating wild things and their uses into a commodity. And *The Wooden Nickel* is when I pointed out that money doesn't really have any fixed value, because what you've got is a price of something, which is what you pay in a store. But the cost of something, and again this is both Leopold and [Henry David] Thoreau, the actual cost of something is what you have to give to get it, which might include the destroyed countryside or the energy to transport it, etcetera, etcetera. So you've got price and cost, and then you've got value in utility. The price of a loaf of bread to someone who is burping from the last meal still is a dollar and a half, the value is pretty marginal. But to someone who's starving, the price is still a dollar and a half, but the value is enormous, right? So price, cost, and value are just fuzzy, fuzzy things --- there's nothing hard about them, so you're taking wooden nickels, right? Then, the Trojan horse is, if you go on this path, you're inviting the economist into the ten, and you're likely to find out that you are harboring something you don't really want to harbor, because sometimes the economist calculations will show that the moose will win, sometimes they'll show that the hydro dam wins. Then, when you've depended on that argument, where are you? What I mean when I said, "You know, it seems like the world is going in this direction, everything needs to have a dollar figure put next to it. The real question is whether biologists and the lovers of wildlife can go on their own and stay aloof and march to a different drummer." It gets back to what argument wins? The short term argument that persuades people on economic grounds, or the long term argument on something much deeper.

Roger Kaye: One issue that we haven't talked about yet is ANILCA [Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act], and it was very controversial and must have been with Fish and Game, where you worked Bob. But I know that you had some role Bob, and you too Ginny, in having language that became the D2 language and served in the Native Claims Settlement Act. Why don't you tell us a little about what ACS role was and what each of you did.

Ginny Wood: Were you down in Juneau then?

Bob Weeden: No, no.

Ginny Wood: He was under Jay Hammond's administration.

Bob Weeden: That was in 1975-76.

Ginny Wood: He took him out of here, down to Juneau, chose him to be his advisor --- what was your official capacity?

Bob Weeden: Division of Policy Development and Planning, Director of. So DIPDIP is what we called it, or DP-squared, either one!

Roger Kaye: Tell me about, as a conservationist, what role you had when you talk about how that related to your state position.

Bob Weeden: I don't exactly know how, and I don't feel like I was personally involved to any real extent, I don't know exactly how that provision came to be in the bill, that's kind of high level politics. But I do know that Arlen Tossing was the first person who ever came out with a public speech, in which he talked about the need to broker this deal. To settle the state land claims and the native land claims and the federal share, because there was a national interest in these lands as well. He said, "The bill cannot do just one, it cannot isolate out native lands. It has to look at all three together." And the Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission proceeded to do that. But Arlen was the one that I remember who first voiced the idea that that was the only way politically to get the job done, and done right.

So that's, I think, that's the origin of how the thing to be offered, the D1 and D2. But now how it sort of got in place, whether it was Ed Weyburn or who else got it in place I don't know.

Ginny Wood: Well, to back up a little bit --- the Native Land Claims was when we got statehood, there was this written into the statehood thing, that when we bought it up from Russia [that's right] there was a clause in saying, 'The Native Land Claims will be adjudicated.' It was put in way back there and nobody had done anything about it because the native's didn't have a voice. And it wasn't until the oil, and all of the sudden the native lands became very important because that's where they'd struck it [oil]. A hundred years ago, wait a minute, they always said we'll be adjudicated, and they never had.

Well, from my point of view, I was amazed at how fast the natives, those people live out in the bush and live off the land and most of them probably hadn't gone past the fourth grade, maybe sixth grade education, how sharp they became and became "God's House' lawyers. I was amazed at how fast, because when I was flying I had occasion to have to stay over in native communities and got know them pretty well. And these people that had much formal education became "God's House" lawyers. What's the guy from Kotzebue who became very...?

Female: Willie Hensley?

Bob Weeden: Willie Hensley is from Kotzebue.

Ginny Wood: Willie Hensley, that's the one I'm thinking of. To listen to them get up and talk and they really brought that out. That's what held up the pipeline for a long time. Because here it was written, and when they bought it from Russia and again when we became a state, there was always this clause, 'will be adjudicate,' but never had been. Well, they lived out and lived their lives and had been here hundreds of years doing it and

doing it very successfully. All of the sudden they became politically very savvy, and I think Willie Hensley was a sample of that. I knew him when he was a little boy over in Kotzebue.

So that, until that... Then the oil companies actually wanted that to be done, so they kind of sided in with the natives because until they did no one could do anything politically. So it was very interesting, just living up here and not being astute of neither of those, to watch the natives get up and make their speeches. How fast I saw those little boys that I knew over in Kotzebue when I got weathered in over their, how articulate they became. Really, that was what held up [ANILCA] for a long time.

Female: *Now did the ACS get involved in the land claims?*

Bob Weeden: Oh yeah, yeah we did.

Ginny Wood: Everybody got involved. But as far as it being the major issue for us to take up, I think we stayed out of it because of the... Except if you asked our opinion, you get the same one I'm giving you now. But as far as politically, the natives did it.

Female: *So, why did you choose to stay? You said you sort of stayed out of it, why?*

Ginny Wood: Well, because we weren't natives. It was their... Here, talking for somebody else. Anyway, that we want somebody else telling us what we should do about the wolves or something.

Bob Weeden: You know, Ginny is talking those aspects of the native land claims that are apart from the land issues. Because of those, we really were interested and spoke out. But when it came to a question of whether there should be village corporations or only regional or what kind of revenue sharing should go on or the amount of the settlement or whatever, none of that felt like our mandate, you might say. However, it is interesting that we had unwitting involvement in getting, in the 1960s, in getting, sort of pushing this agitation for a settlement forward. We had, I and Fish and Game, were, as I said before, in charge of the waterfowl stuff. We thought it would be nice to have a waterfowl refuge out in Minto, the Minto Flats area. In proposing that we, of course, had on the one hand someone like John Butrovich, who was the head of the bank of Fairbanks, the Fairbanks National Bank, First National Bank.

Ginny Wood: He'd also been out at Juneau as a representative.

Bob Weeden: But he had had a cabin out there, and they were duck hunters. Anyway, there was quite a cadre of duck hunters out in Minto who were a bit worried about this idea of a refuge out there. But in any case, we pursued it. But when the Alaska Conservation Society decided to have a public meeting on the question of this Minto Flats game refuge, waterfowl refuge, we got an irate letter from Richard Frank in Minto saying that this was a native issue. So we said, "Okay, we'll pay your way to come to this

meeting." And we did. Richard stood up and gave the first speech I ever heard about the native land claims, and it was specifically to that Minto area.

But it was, I think my personal and our recognition of that connection between the native land claims and stuff we were doing with land use, including that waterfowl refuge, that really opened our eyes to the bigger issue that was there.

Well, that was the mid-60s. Then, as the whole claims thing evolved and Maurie Thompson and the Alaska Federation of Natives, just as Ginny said, all of these really articulate smart people came and began speaking out in favor of it.

The D1 and D2 actions were put into the bill and finally passed. I guess D1 just set aside all of the lands pending, some kind of a claim. D2 was the identification of the federal interest lands.

We did then, as a conservation society, become very much a part of this maps on the floor group. One of the people working with us much of the time was [not Richard Fineburg], the fellow who always knew more about the mountains and the creeks and the hills and the boundaries then anybody else. Really knew more because he had studied these maps so much. You remember the fellow that was in Juneau and he became... The name will come to me. Anyway...

Ginny Wood: Oh, wait minute, I think I know who it is, because he just was honored last winter.

Bob Weeden: Could very well be.

Ginny Wood: Yeah, I know who you mean.

Bob Weeden: In any case, we had a lot of people who spent a lot of time in the country and knew, I mean Larry Mayo with his glacier work knew a lot of these areas quite well from a very different perspective, a high perspective. I knew some of them and everybody had something to contribute. People had taken trips in the Brook's Range and various places. So we felt we were taking part in a very worthwhile exercise, a very superficial one I might say. I mean, you really don't identify a national interest in five million acres by five people sitting around with their rumps in the air, looking like a bunch of pintail ducks and pointing fingers at a map. I mean, that's kind of an amateurish way of doing. The same thing is being done...

Ginny Wood: Well, it was amazing --- there would be somebody, usually somebody that had an airplane, or like me, who'd been hiking up there long before it was ever thought about being national land [I'd been leading trips up there]. Then somebody else, it would be from quite a few people looking at maps and say, "We should save that, that's a very important place." Larry, because he was a geologist and had his own airplane, really knew everything, had been in a lot of places, and I had been guiding up there since the early '70s. So long before they made any of those parks up there, just

collectively, somebody hunting up there. Yeah. But it was somebody that would say, "Hey, I think we should save this." And it was all done with maps on the kitchen floors.

Bob Weeden: Remember the same thing was being done, probably even more often and more actively and with more persuasive power by the folks in Anchorage, with their rumps in the air. The Peg Tileston and all of those folks.

Ginny Wood: And probably in Juneau too, there were lots of people.

Bob Weeden: In Juneau and in Sitka for southeast Alaska. So, all together...

Ginny Wood: They'd taken boats there.

Bob Weeden: Ed Wayburn and some of the other folks that were very powerful at the Washington level, leading the big groups like Sierra Club. They had advice from, effectively, from scores of people in Alaska who spent those hours with the maps.

Roger Kaye: Including yourself.

Bob Weeden: Including myself, sure.

Roger Kaye: So how did your job at Fish and Game, which is adamantly against having very many federal withdrawals of ANILCA, relate to your personal work here?

Bob Weeden: Well, I wasn't with Fish and Game in the decade of the '70s, I had already left, so I was not worried about that. It was difficult in another way, though, because I was still very good friends with a lot of Fish and Game people, and especially over the subsistence question, which was a part of it. A part of the lands, the acreage, there was the question of the use by native people, and how you frame that subsistence question. That was really divisive, honestly, it lost me some friendship. People that I thought I knew and enjoyed being with and we shared a lot of Fish and Game things together, all of the sudden they weren't there anymore with me. They were anti-fed, anti-D2. They were concerned about the feds taking over wildlife management through this subsistence thing. Lots of state-federal jealousy's came up and just the entire idea of a hundred million acres of wilderness that there would be very limited access to was an affront to their idea of wildlife management.

Ginny Wood: Well, even when we finally got the refuge, and that was not the D2 part, it was called a range then, even after we got it, who should administer it? I remember, this was when Steven got appointed to the job he's had ever since. We never elect anybody, if you elect anybody you're going to have them for your lifetime. I don't know what kind of a government that is, but anyway, or else you appoint your offspring to take your place. The... [well, what was I talking about to start with?]

Bob Weeden: The Artic Range proposal.

Ginny Wood: Yeah, oh yeah, who would administer it? A lot of people, including Collins, thought it should be...

Bob Weeden: Florence Collins?

Ginny Wood: No, No, George Collins.

Bob Weeden: Oh, George Collins.

Ginny Wood: Thought it should be under the Park Service, and we said, "No." The minute you do that, and here were, we had to have Camp Denali down in the park. The thing is, as soon as you make it the park, then they're going to have big hotels and then they're going to have to have roads to and then they'll have to develop it as they do national parks, ever since Yellowstone. So that would be the last person to have this type of thing, it's wilderness. It's not going to be wilderness if it's a park, not that you're against national parks or trying to abolish them. But, having seen what happened in the McKinley Park, it means when you have a national park, you have a big hotel there and then you have people who might get hurt and sued and then you have to have bridges across the rivers and trail signs and all of that. This should be wilderness, it shouldn't have any sign of man. When you go there, you're on your own.

Then we thought, well maybe Bureau of Land Management. It can't be a Forest Service thing, there's no trees up there.

When they finally established it, but they still hadn't decided who was going to run it, it turned out to be Fish and Wildlife. But Stevens came into the act and said, "Who should manage?" Then, when we got it, they established the range without saying who would manage it. They still hadn't decided it. Stevens said he was just going to hold up and not let anybody manage it. Conservation said, 'Oh goody, goody. That's just what we want!" That will keep it in wilderness longer!'

[END]